

## House Republican Press Release

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### Klarides Introduces 'Hero of New Haven'



#### Derby legislator presents local doctor at Red Cross ceremony

NEW HAVEN- At the South Central Connecticut Chapter of the Red Cross's 'Heroes of New Haven County' awards ceremony held today at the Omni Hotel, Representative Themis Klarides (R-Derby) had the honor of presenting Dr. John O'Brien with the Medical Award.

Dr. O'Brien, who is section chief of physical medicine at St. Raphael's Hospital, was honored by the Red Cross for his service to people in need of prosthetic limbs. On trip to Grenada a few years back, Dr. O'Brien was astounded at the number of island residents who were using prostheses that had been whittled from tree trunks. Dr. O'Brien was determined to return to the island and found a clinic with the hopes of improving the quality of life for these people. In late 2003, he returned to Grenada to establish his clinic, helping dozens of people to walk again.

In August of this year, Dr. O'Brien brought former cricket champion Mello Peters from Grenada to Connecticut to fit him for a prosthetic leg. Peters was instrumental in getting O'Brien's clinic off the ground, having allowed him to use one of his industrial baking ovens to melt plastics for prosthetics. Dr. O'Brien and St. Raphael's donated all of their fees to Mello's care and new prosthesis.

"It was truly an honor to make this presentation today," said Representative Klarides. "We truly need to recognize the special people among us who dedicate themselves so selflessly to ensure a greater quality of life and health for people everywhere. John O'Brien represents the finest level of citizen compassion turned to action, and I salute his great contributions."

The American Red Cross is a humanitarian organization led by volunteers and guided by its Congressional Charter and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross Movement. It provides relief to victims of disasters and helps people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies. For more information on the South Central Connecticut Red Cross, visit their website at: [www.arcsct.org](http://www.arcsct.org).